

DESIGN

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MOUNTAIN MOTIFS IN DECORATIVE DESIGN

N. B. Zane

University of Oregon

THE "type form" for mountain motifs is the triangle, resting upon its base and with the two slanting sides of equal length. Such a shape, by its very stability in the sense of firmness upon its base and its uplifted apex, suggests to the beholder the essential qualities of a mountain. In other words, the triangle becomes the symbol for a nature form. The value of this symbol in Japanese prints relating to their beloved Fujiyama has become familiar. But though the Japanese have exploited their mountain they have by no means exhausted the decorative possibilities of the symbol; and its use by American design students, especially if they live in any one of the sections of our big country where mountain peaks are a cherished focus in the landscape, offers many possibilities. It is the purpose of this paper to describe how the triangular type form and its more graceful cousin with curved sides like the parabola may be treated as individual units or composed in groups and with other forms appropriate to the idea of mountains and mountainous environment.

Our first thought in handling any decorative shape is, that whatever application of lines or tones may be made to it, they shall be in full accord with and a demonstration of

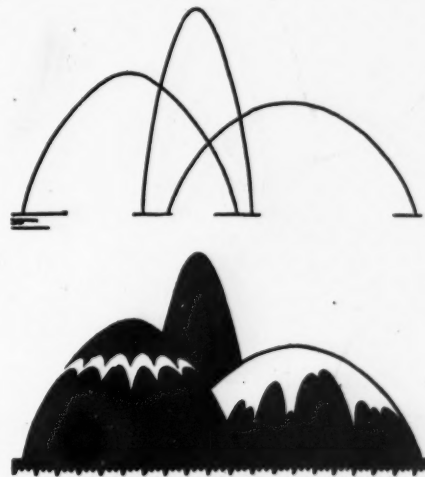
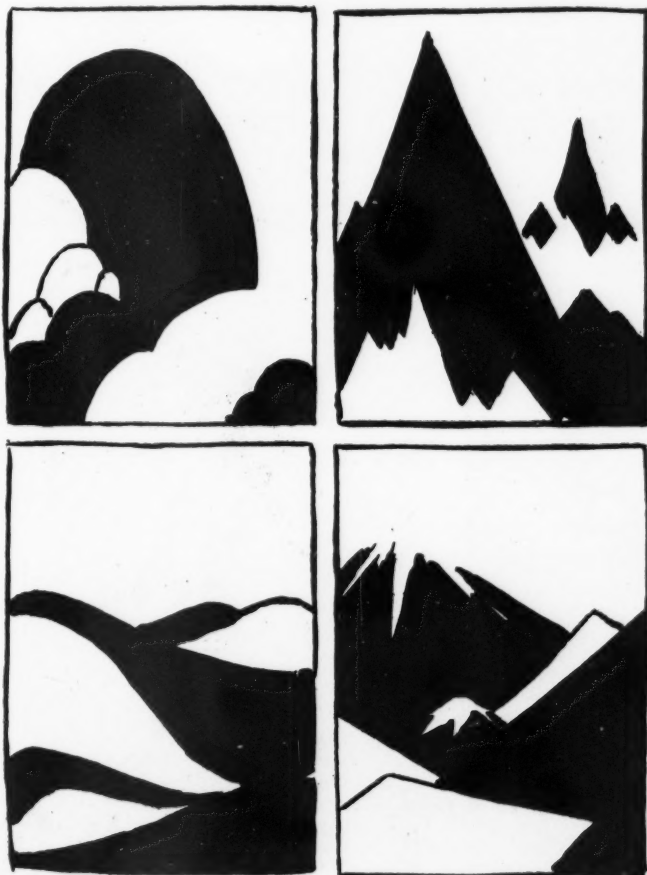
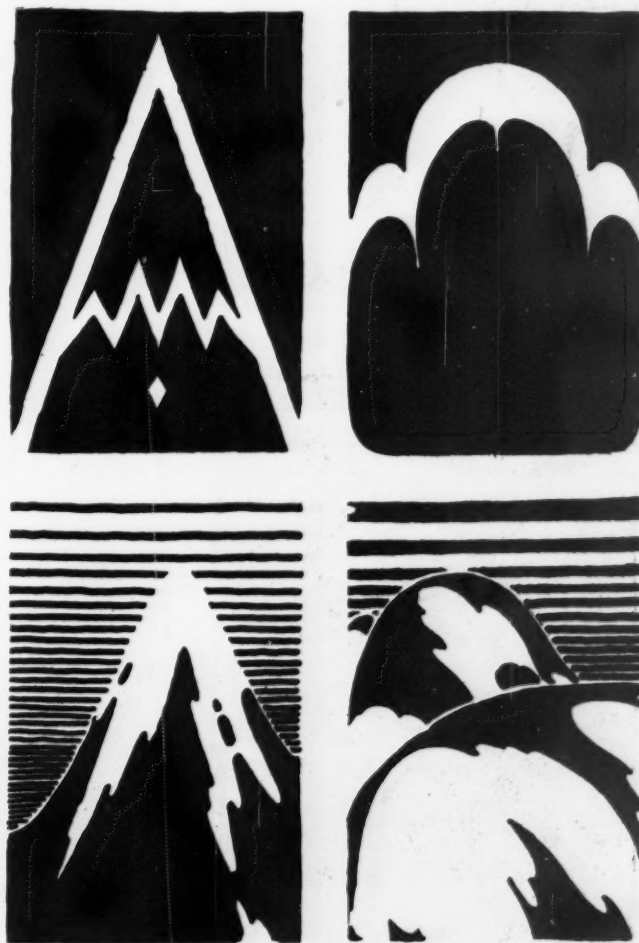


Illustration No. 3

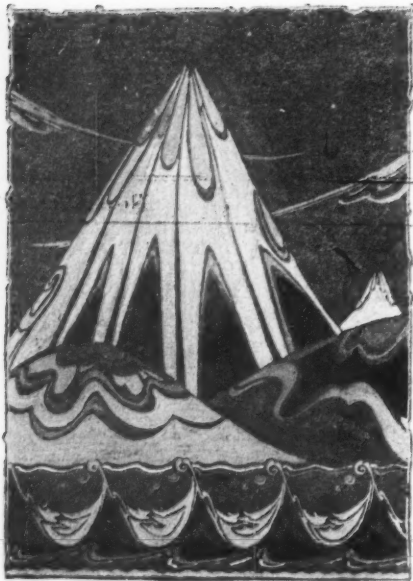
the principles of design. Whatever lines and tones are used, then, to bring attraction and interest to the shape, must indicate a recognition of variety and harmony. The illustrations by Miss Crouch and Miss Merrick will show what individual students may do with such a problem. The



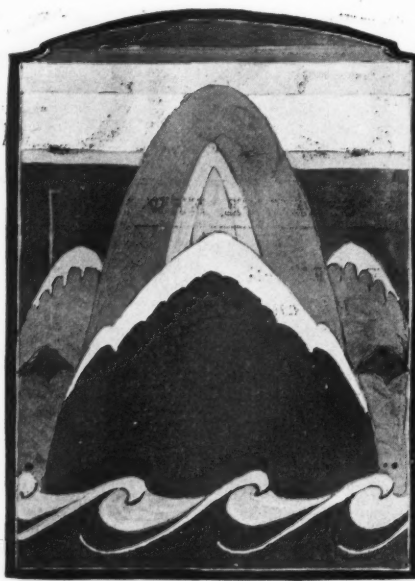
M. Merrick



H. Crouch



R. Talbott



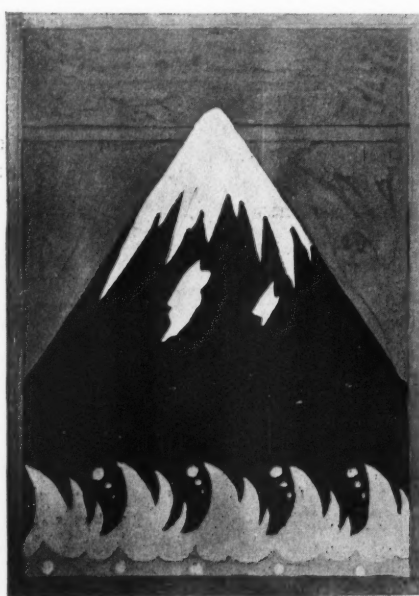
I. Wedemeyer



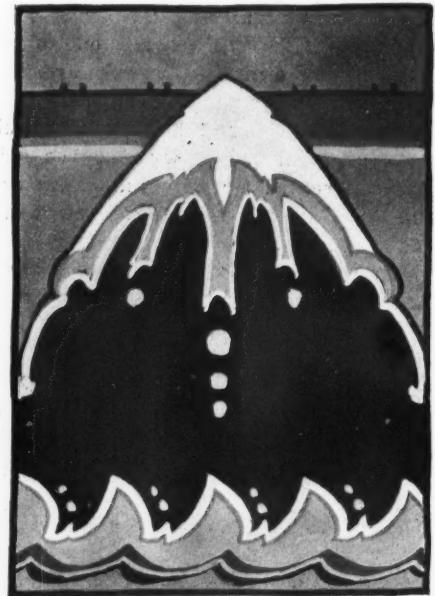
M. Andrews



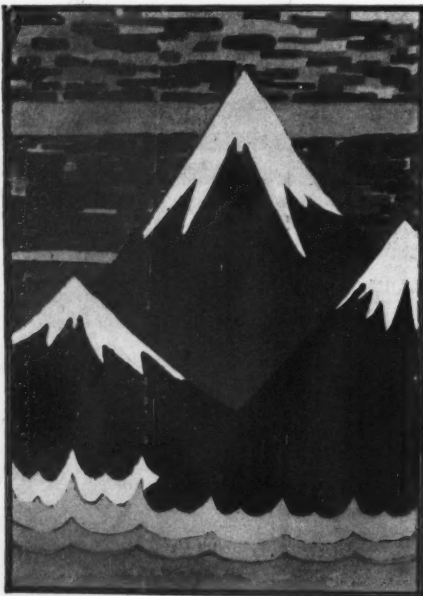
A. McGee



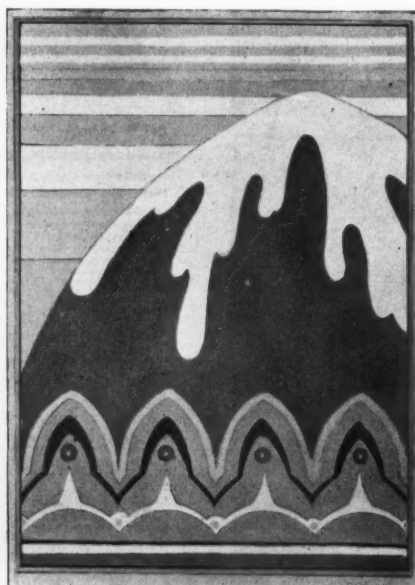
Thelma Adams



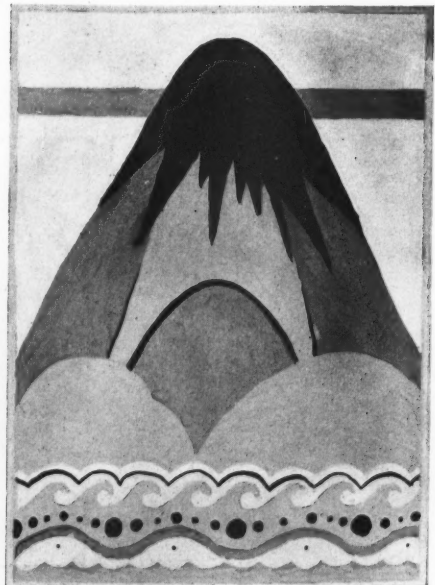
D. Fisch



Wallace Johnson



M. Endicott



Warren C. Powell

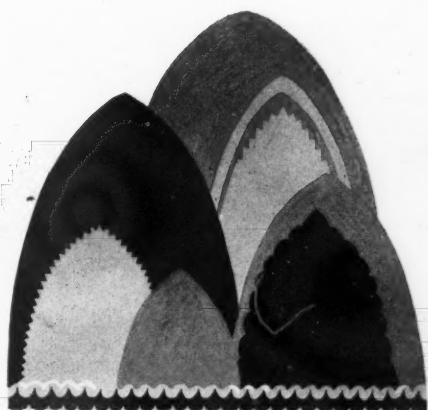


Illustration No. 4

problem as assigned about like this—"Produce four trial or experimental motifs with brush and black ink upon paper. Treat the type shapes in such a way, singly or in groups, that variety and harmony may be observed". The students were given all possible freedom in exercising their own personal taste in selection and arrangement. Effort was made to show that the problem involved (1) the general idea or the character of the motif, (2) a definite medium with the acceptance of its definite limitations, (3) an opportunity for the student to make his own experiments in the handling of line and shape and thereby enlarging his own designing experience, and (4) the further practice of one's critical judgment as to the presence and best use of variety, balance, harmony, rhythm and unity in the product. The phrases "I like this" or "I don't like that" were avoided. Not because liking and disliking do not relate to the esthetic experience and are of no importance, but that such phrases are overworked, indefinite and trite; and, as such, less valuable in a helpful critical vocabulary. If the students think at all of "pleasing the teacher", the implication is that they can do it best by their ability to discuss their own work intelligently in relation to the eternal principles involved, including the gradual attainment of perfection of execution, rather the exhibition of any mannerisms of the instructor's own work that they might cleverly borrow.

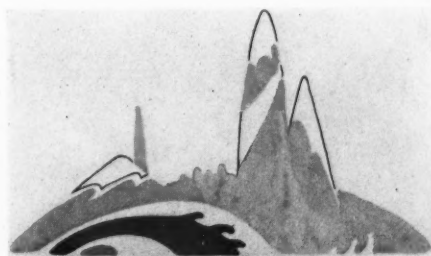
Illustration 3 was produced with the help of cut paper



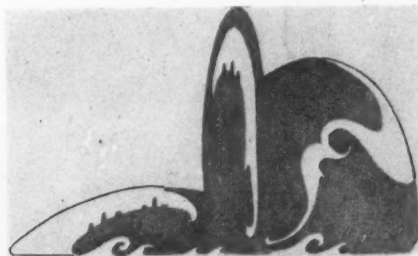
Block Printed Wall Hanging—N. B. Zane

forms—symmetrical shapes scissored from folded paper. For variety's sake, three different widths and three different heights were used, and these shapes moved here and there upon the base line until the combination contour gave pleasing possibilities in shape. When a satisfactory shape was realized, the edges of the shapes were pencilled in and the dark tones blackened in with a brush. For an item of additional interest the bottom edge of the group was accented. It is so much more worth while than an uninteresting flat line.

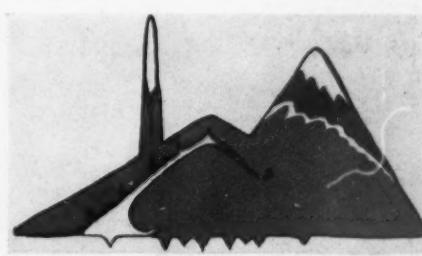
Illustration 4 is an experiment in three values—introducing a third tone for further variety. Seven cut paper



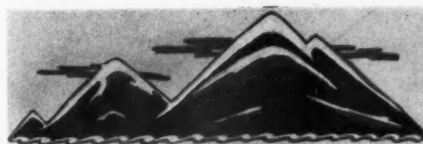
E. Winn



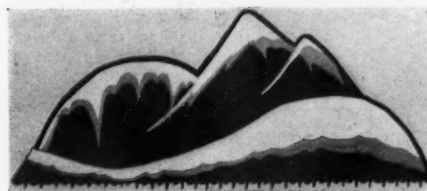
E. Winn



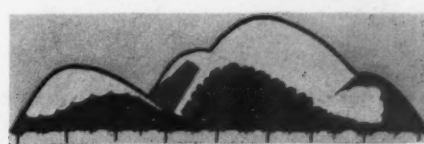
E. Winn



I. Wedemeyer



I. Wedemeyer



I. Wedemeyer



E. Warne

forms are used in this instance to make the most of the possibilities of different heights and widths, with accented edges here and there—"just for fun"—including the heavily accented bottom border.

Number 5 follows, also in three tones; very abstract, of course, in adjustment to vertical panels, just to see what will happen with type forms and their combinations, plus such enrichment of the shapes as fancy suggests. The student can do nothing better than to try his own hand and ingenuity with the production of many such experiments in pattern. Many of us have seen and marvelled at the Japanese books of Japanese designs that have come to our hands—page after page of patterns exploiting the decorative possibilities of motifs like clouds, rocks, waves and plum

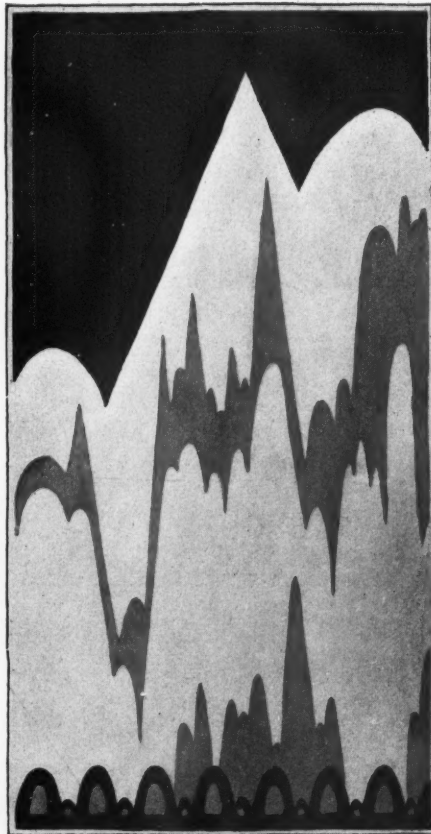
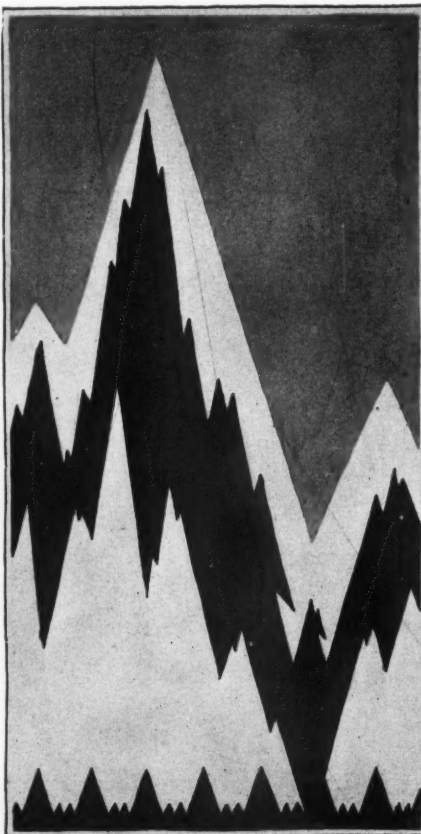
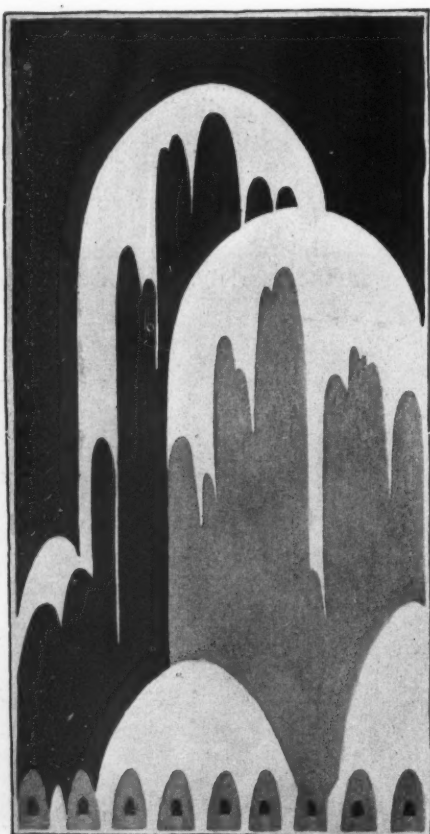
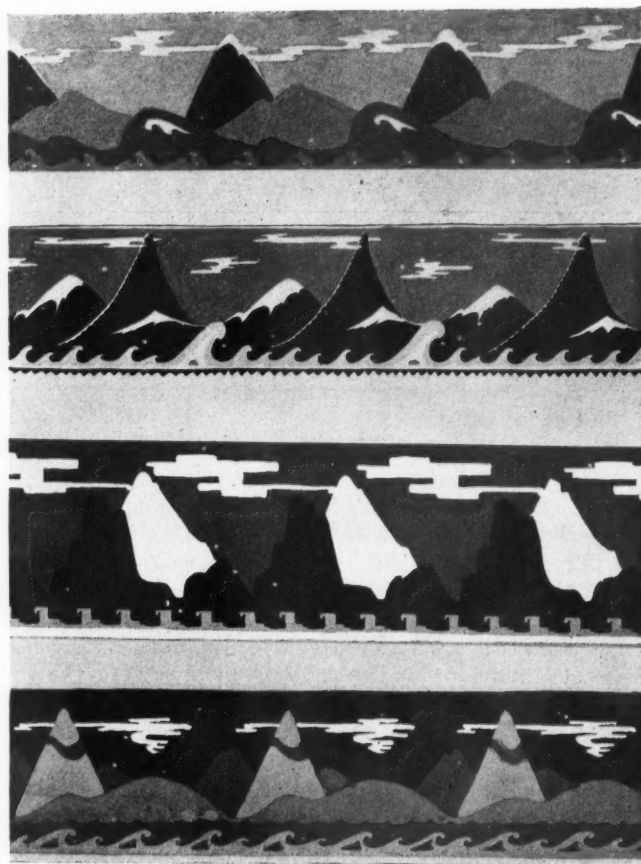


Illustration No. 5

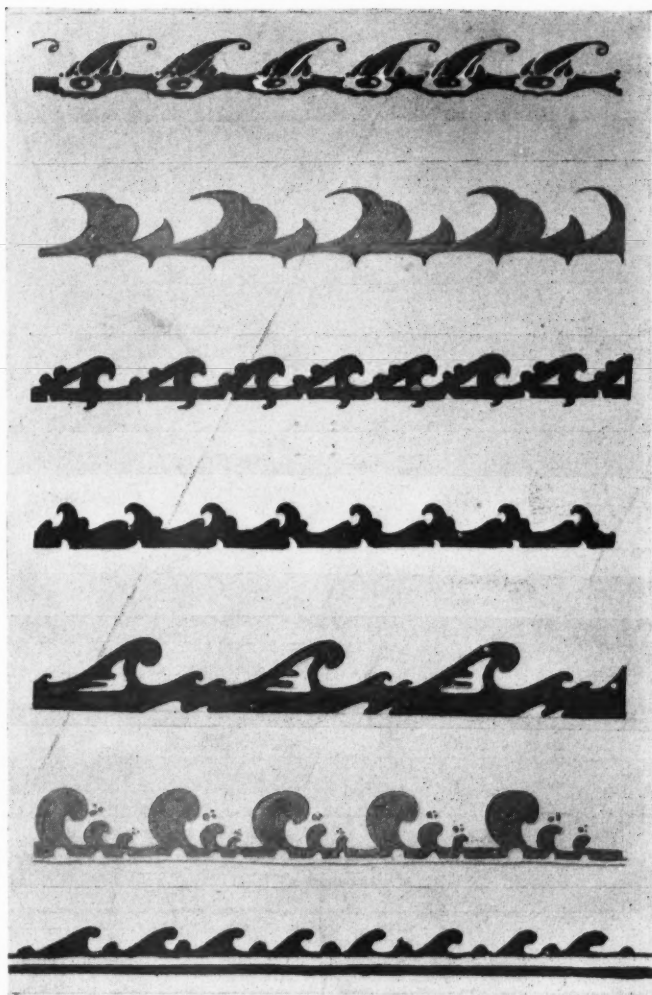
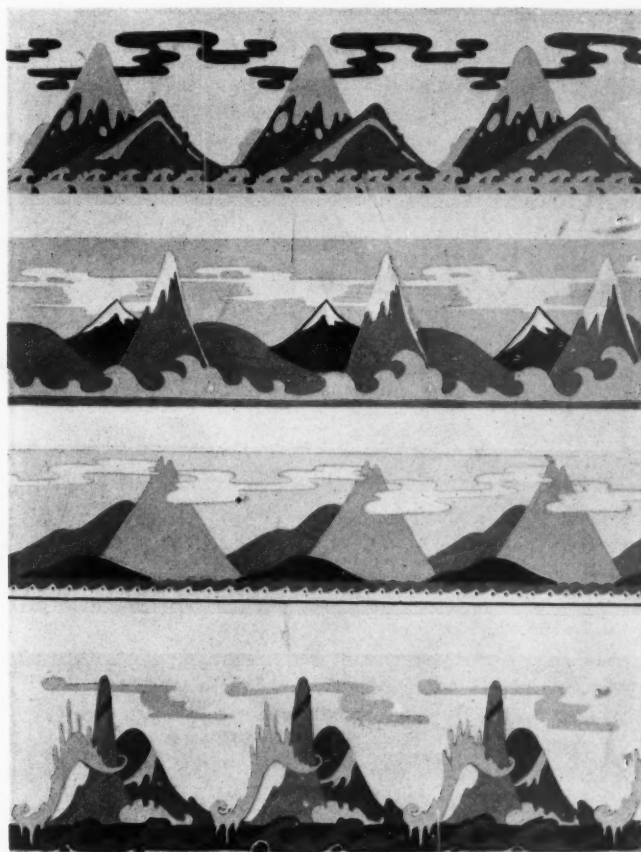
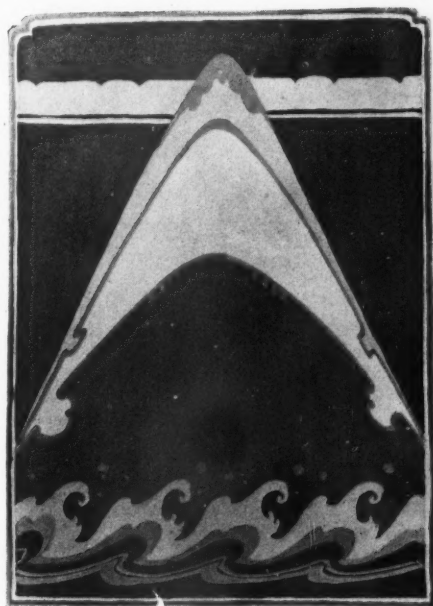


Illustration No. 6



blossoms. Perhaps, as students of design, in our lazier way and seeking for quick results, we only scratch the surface; rather than go deep into the mine for those rich rewards that only an increased personal attention and effort will bring about. If the student will take the time to produce not a few but many sheets of such experiments, and get the habit of such experimenting, the whole field of design will share his reward.

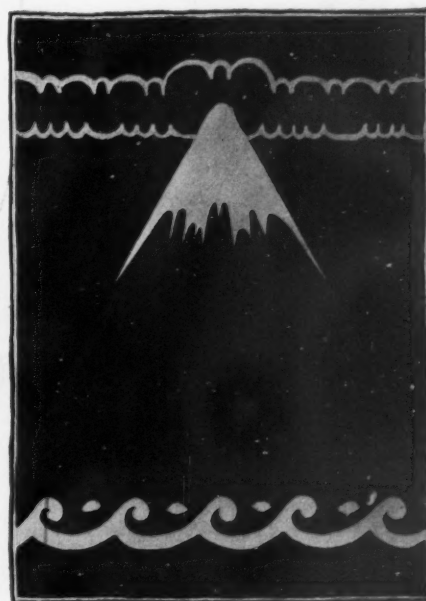
(Continued on page 119)



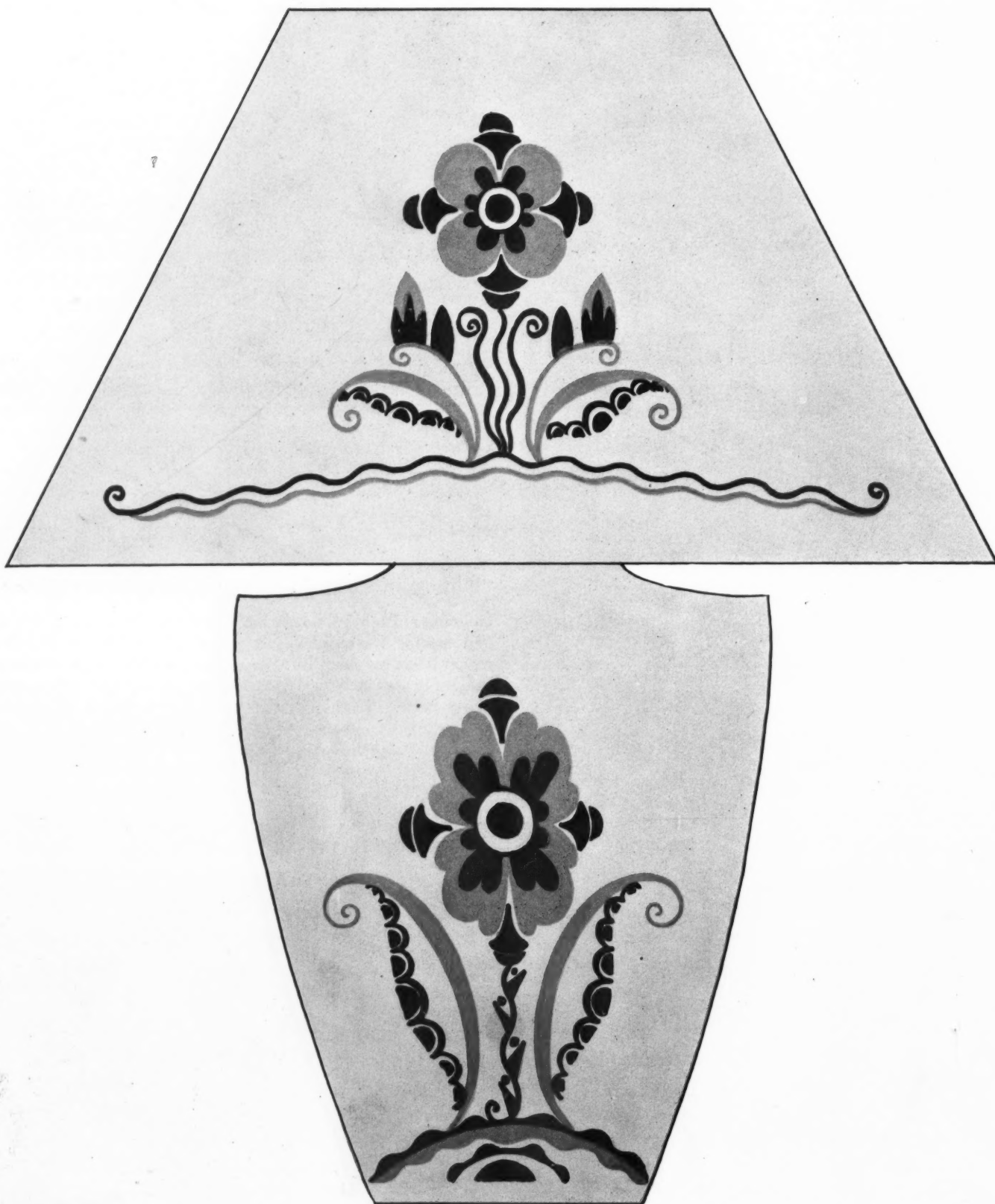
K. Mutzig



Bradford Collins



Dorothy Jonsrud



Design for Lamp and Shade—May Warner

Design in Deep Turquoise, Sapphire Blue, Jade Green, Red Orange, Lemon Yellow and Yellow Green.



DESIGN FOR BATIK, NYMPHS AND SATYRS—ELISABETH ROBINEAU

NOVEMBER, 1927
 SUPPLEMENT TO
 DESIGN
 KERICAMIC STUDIO

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 SYRACUSE, N. Y.



Jardiniere—Nellie Hagan

Largest flower, Maiden Blush with Rose and Peach Pink in center. Smaller flowers, Rose and Peach Pink. Leaves and dots, Grey Green. Stems, Grey Violet. Jar, Satsuma with Peach and Rose figures. Birds, Purple Grey with Satsuma and Jersey Cream markings. Bands repeat the Greys and Greens used in the design.



A YEAR OF CREATIVE DESIGN
(Continued from October Issue.)

Sylvia Coster

Evander Childs High School

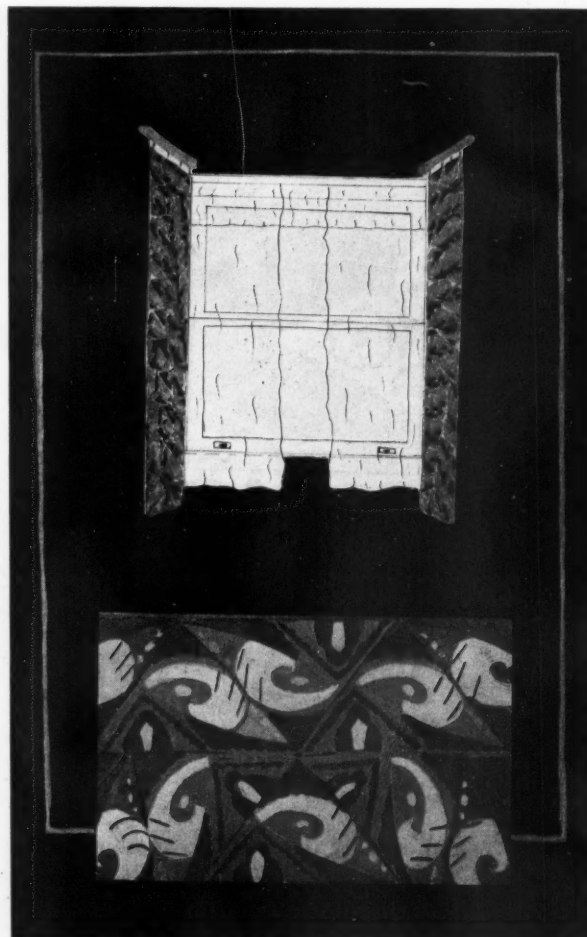
The following term we planned a problem in the four major crafts. It isn't necessary to go through the lessons, after describing the work of the first term. The method was the same. There was much research as to the nature of the craft. Textiles came first. We designed a little silk curtain, and a window on which to put it. The points considered were the proportions of the window and its divisions, how much of figured material and how much plain, if any; and what kind of window suited different houses, locations and purposes. I do not know if any of our designs could have been used in a factory. I was not interested. The idea was to gain some sense of good proportion in masses, some variety in surface, some grace in line. As usual, the entire plate was prepared for and visualized before it was begun, and there were no models. The criticism that followed the final exhibition of the work and its comparison with real window curtaining was: "Why do they make all curtains in the stores so much alike? They all look of one style."

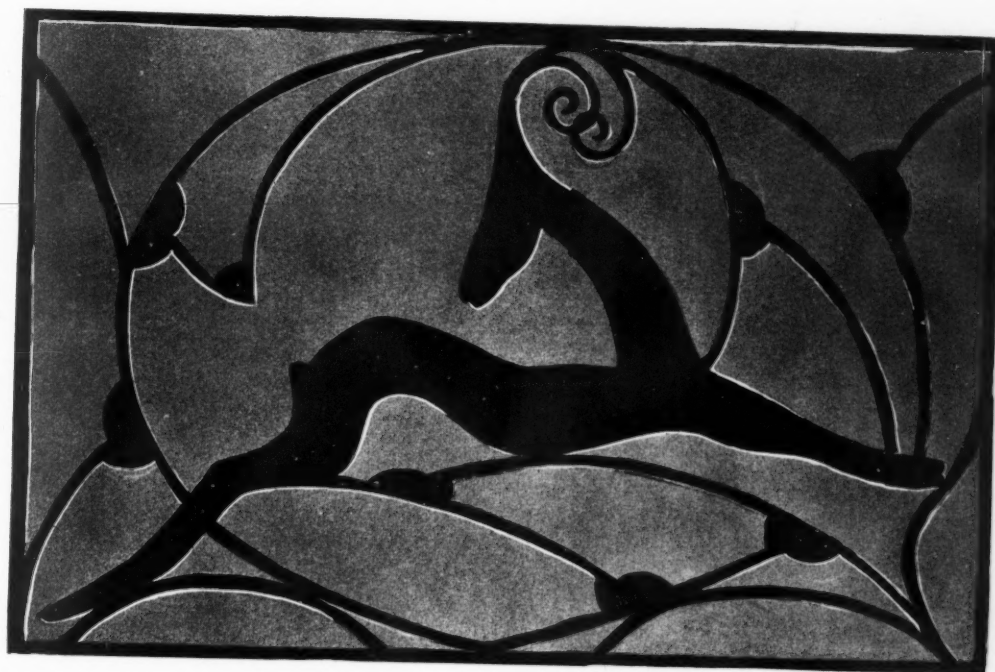
Our next design was a dear delight to me. We studied pottery and glass. Reports told us how it was made, fired, glazed and decorated. We built our own designs from the beginning of clay. We decided that there was no flat surface to carry repeats. We wanted the jar itself good in form. Very solemnly we felt the surface of our jars, from the bottom up, from rim to shoulder, around the body. One line was drawn. It was compared with that rare vision in our mind. Here sat a class of thirty intelligent youngsters ranging from fifteen to nineteen years old, in perfect seriousness feeling vases that were not there, until the pencil came down in a swinging curve and that "first fine rapture" was captured. We felt the place for the decoration, and the lines of our feeling dominated and even suggested the form of the decoration. The rapt expression on the face of one young Italian almost made the tears come—he was so sure

that this was the way to feel "art." Who knows but some day, that little groove in his brain, achieved by his effort then, will turn his thought unashamedly toward the fine and clear instead of the common and garish? It is what creative art should do.

We took metals next and produced screens, grills, book-ends, fat elephants, and attenuated colliers. No two worked for the same result. And the last problem, which is to come, we hope to make a puppet show based on "Androcles and the Lion." Dear knows what will happen to Androcles or the lion in the process. Least of all do I know, their humble teacher. But this I know, I have stood beside their desks, silently watching work I would have given much to have thought of, no matter how poor their technic. We cannot after all develop every side to any activity. In a one year course in design for those who will probably never be designers, you may choose to develop technic, the history of the process, the industrial phases, or the joy of creation. The pupils would rise as one man to choose the last. Technics come and go. Industrial phases change or lapse. The subject itself may drop out of existence, but a man's imagination is his own to the final end if he keeps it so, and as he makes it a joy or a woe, so is his life.

"Who holds by thee hath heaven in fee
To gild his dross thereby;
And knowledge sure that he'll endure
A child until he die;
"For to make plain that man's disdain
Is but new beauty's birth,
For to possess in loneliness
The joy of all the earth."

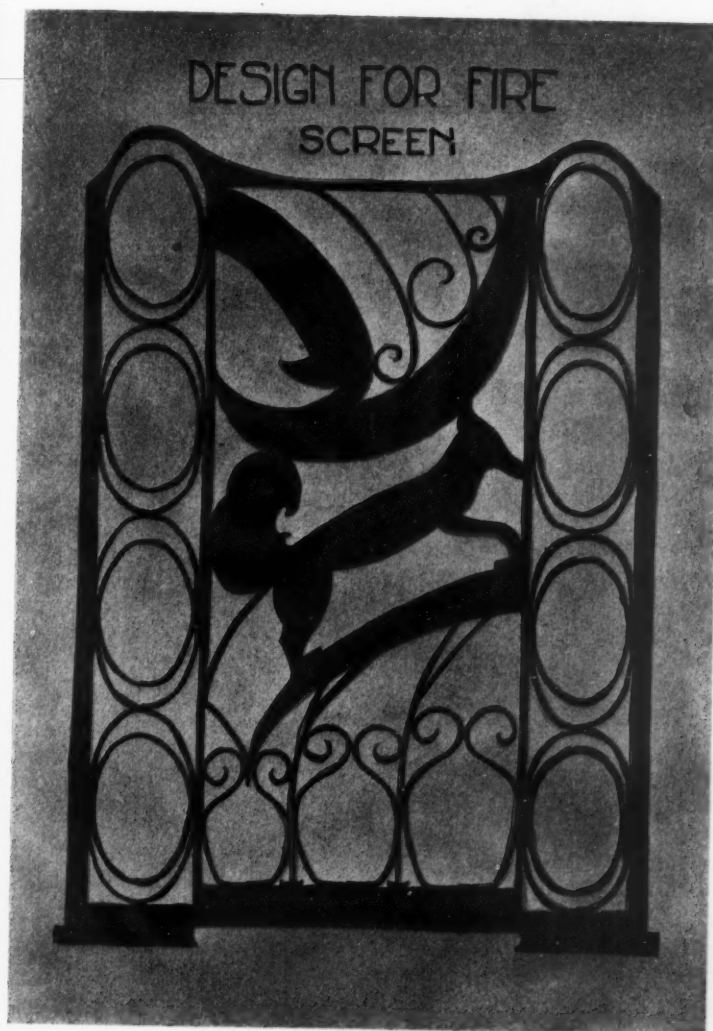




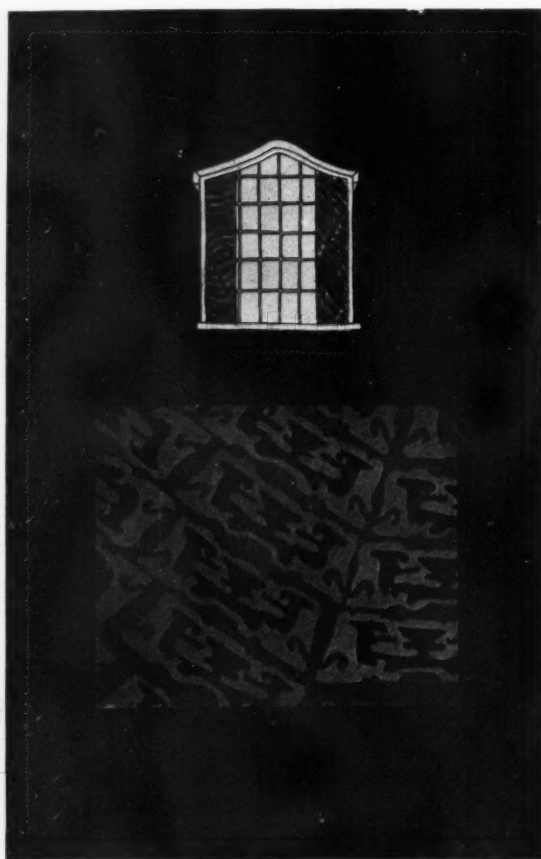
Design for Iron Gate—Mary Gaffney



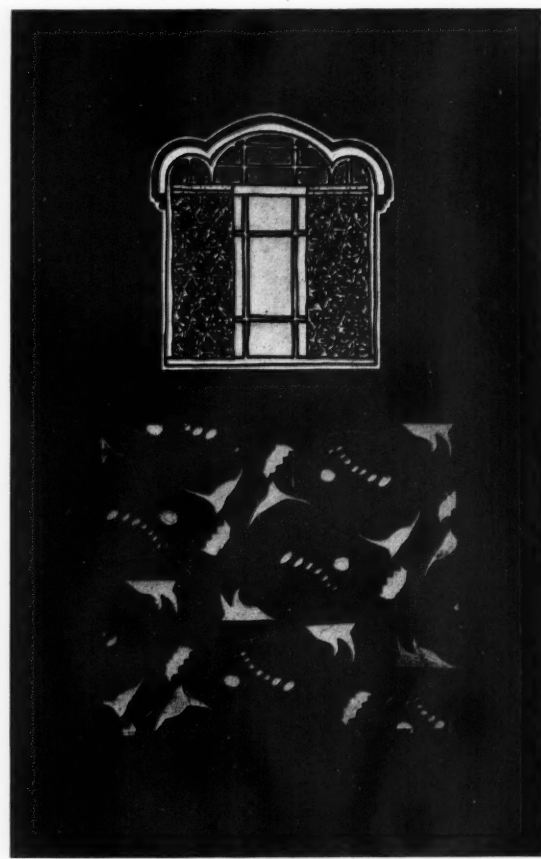
Edw. Smollen



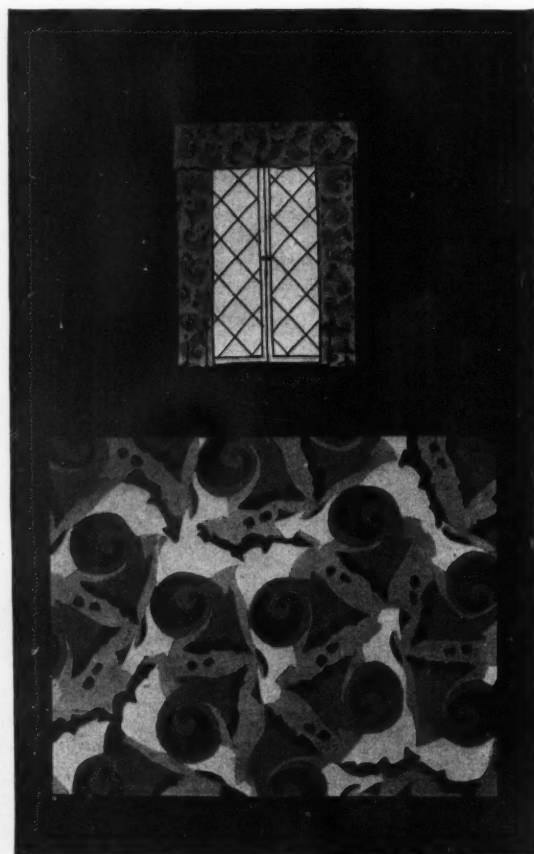
L. Gronim



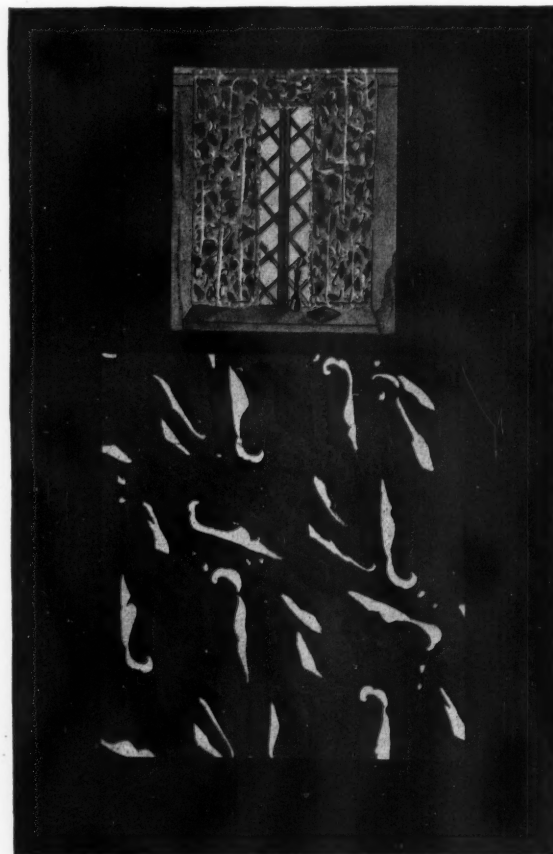
Textile Design



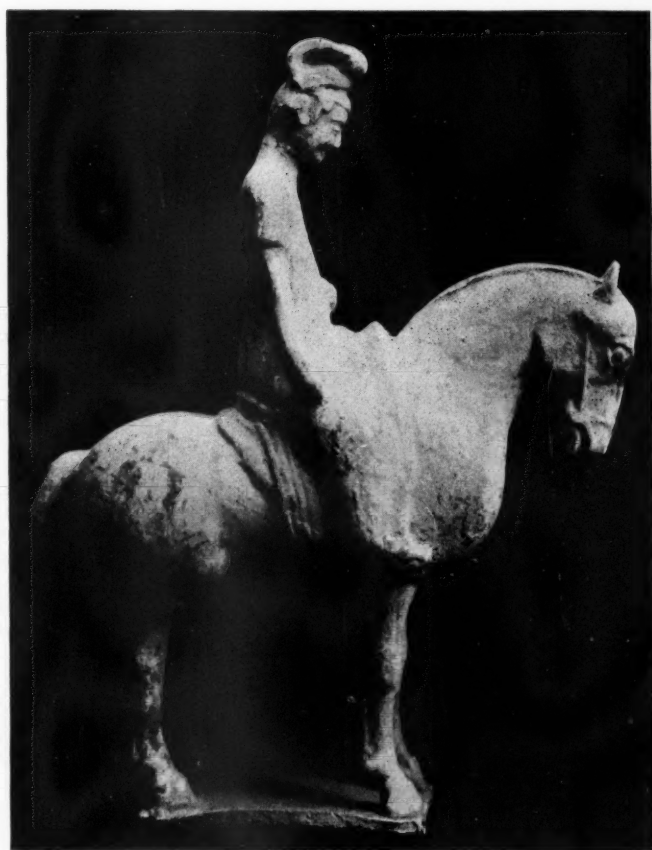
Walter J. Glass



Ethel Lyman



Virginia Schneider



Lady on Horse—Berlin—T'ang Dynasty

POTTERY FIGURES OF THE HAN AND T'ANG DYNASTIES

A Clay Problem for the Schools

Adelaide Alsop-Robineau

THERE is nothing that young people enjoy more than modelling in clay and the results are often surprising in action and life-likeness. By life-likeness, I do not mean a photographic representation of form and detail, but a likeness to *life*, a movement, a line, an expression, that immediately registers its truth to reality. Notice particularly the action of the T'ang actor from the Berlin Museum. Again the "Lady on Horse" from the same collection, notice how the meek yet dignified curve forward of the neck and head is repeated in the neck and head of the horse. The whole atmosphere spells "Lady." The naivete of the quaint dogs is amusingly repeated in the two examples of Mexican majolica. It is the catching of familiar attitudes, familiar expressions, familiar actions, that amuses the fancy even when the rest of the modelling is left to the imagination. In fact, the thought in the modeller's mind is better expressed and brought into prominence by an intentional disregard of detail in the subordinate parts of the figurine.

Before starting to model, it is always well, if the student is far enough advanced, to make a rough sketch of the intended figurine as a sort of guide to the teacher in understanding what the student is trying to express. This also gives an opportunity for criticism and suggestion, though with younger children it is best not to interfere too much with their play and "feeling" for form in the clay. A photograph or two, or, if fortunate enough to find a few good originals, will be enough to illustrate to the students their line of approach to the problem.

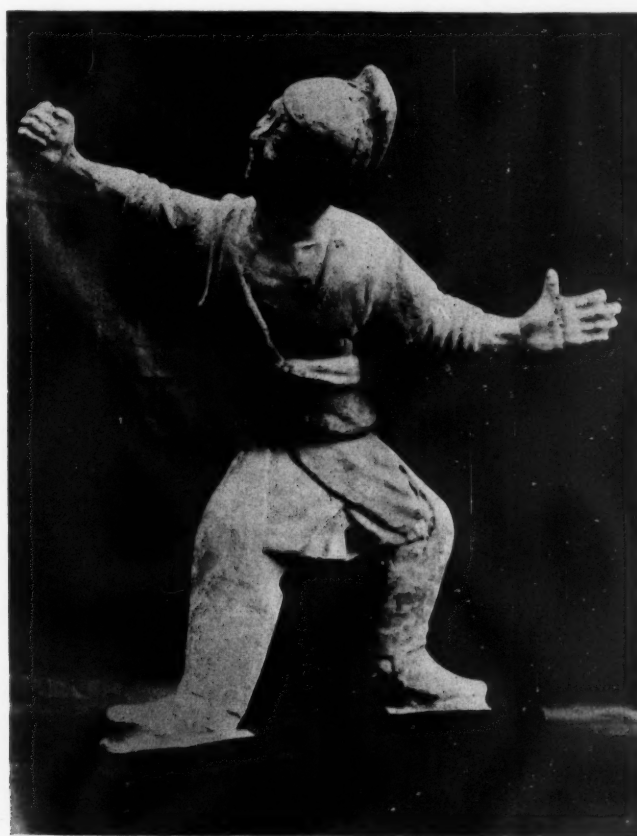


Figure of an Actor—Berlin—T'ang Dynasty

The main thing is to insist on simplicity of form and color, eliminating as much detail as is possible and still preserve expression. The examples of early Chinese figurines shown in these pages, well illustrate the effects to be desired, though, given freedom of expression, many still more interesting and unexpected effects may be developed.

When there is no kiln for firing and glazing, there are many materials which harden like stone and can, if desired, be colored with enamel paints. The stoneware clay put up for school work by the Western Stoneware Co. of Monmouth, Illinois, is excellent for this purpose and quite inexpensive. It may be fired successfully at any temperature from cone 010 to cone 10 and can be glazed at a low temperature with glazes which can be bought ready prepared from the manufacturers. All that is necessary is to write the dealers in ceramic materials for a list of glazes maturing at 010, 05, 01, or at whatever temperature is preferred. Be sure always that the clay is free from sticks, stones and other extraneous materials. It should be carefully kneaded or wedged to expel all air bubbles, for a very small one can make a very big explosion in the firing. The ball of clay should be cut with a wire several times to see whether any bubbles remain and then the two parts thrown together with force before kneading again. Pat the clay into a compact ball after each kneading. The clay should be just moist enough to be easily manipulated without sticking to the fingers. As large a ball should be used as will easily be contained in the form to be made and after the big masses are modelled small bits of clay can be added where necessary by drawing the base of the addition into the mass with strokes of the fingers or modelling tool, as much should be done as possible before the clay dries as details added later are liable to be harsh.

(Continued on page 116)



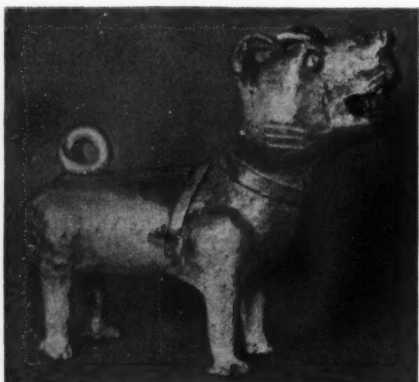
Well Jar-Tomb
Han Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



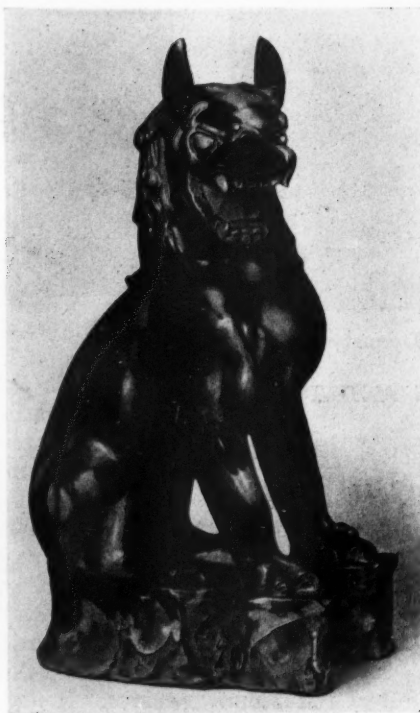
Head of a Horse—Early T'ang Dynasty



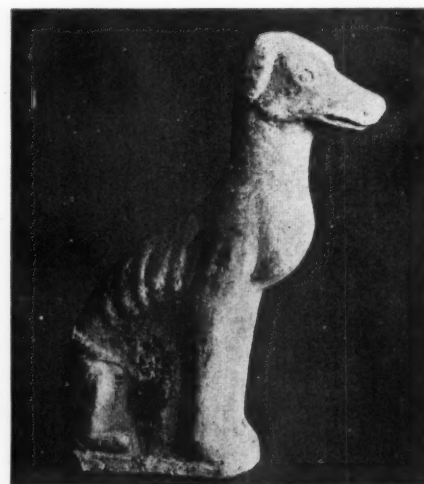
Figure—T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



Han Dynasty
Early Ceramics Ware of China



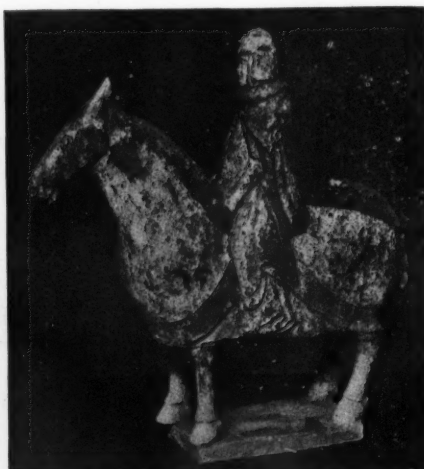
T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



Han Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares of China



T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters
Hetherington



Tomb Figure—Wei Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



Han Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares of China
Hetherington



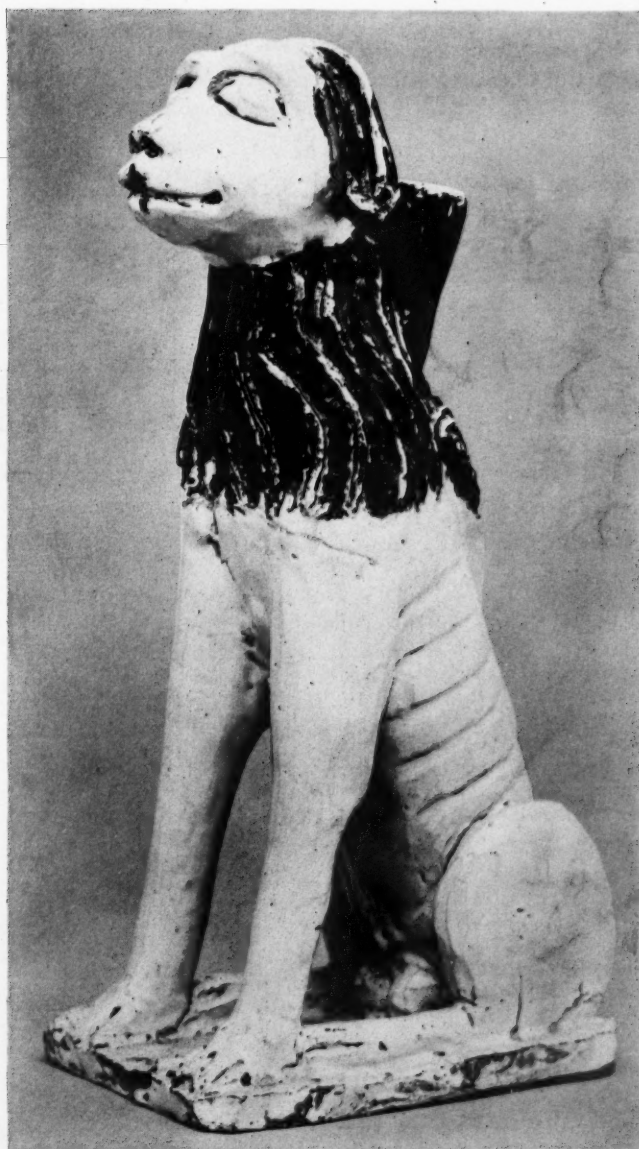
Mexican Majolica—17th to 19th Century
(Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Grave Pottery Figurines and Bowl—T'ang Dynasty
(Newark Museum)



Ming Pottery—Berlin Museum



Mexican Majolica
(Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Figure—T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



T'ang Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares
of China



T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



Figure of Actor—T'ang
Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



T'ang Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares
of China
Hetherington



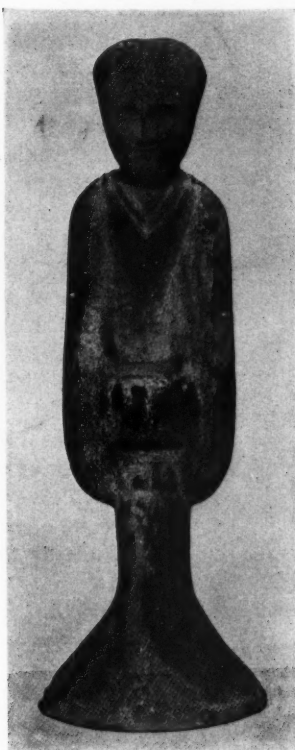
Stamped and Moulded Tile—Han Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters
Hetherington



T'ang Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters
Hetherington



Wei Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares of China



Tomb Figure—Wei Dynasty
Art of Chinese Potters



T'ang Dynasty
Early Ceramic Wares of China



Figure of a Seated Woman—T'ang Dynasty
Berlin



Figure of Man and Woman of the 1st Century
Berlin



Ming Pottery—Hetherington

POTTERY FIGURES OF THE HAN AND T'ANG DYNASTIES

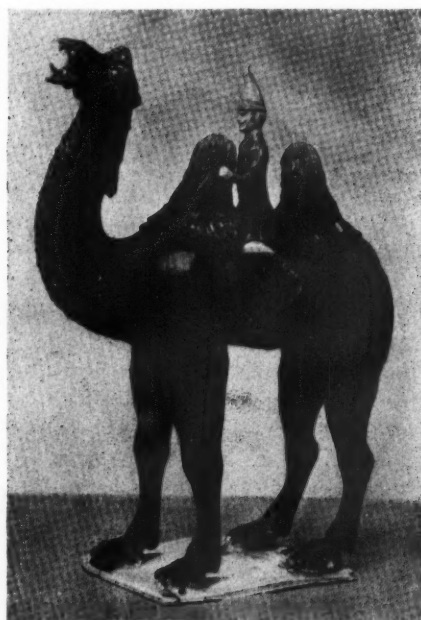
(Continued from page 111)

So long as the student is still working on the figurine it should be kept covered with a damp piece of outing flannel and placed in a covered crock when not being worked upon. When finished it should be allowed to dry slowly in a cupboard or other place protected from drafts, as wind will dry the surface while the interior is still moist and cracking may result. The piece must be thoroughly dry before firing. Three weeks is not too long to let stand before placing in the kiln.

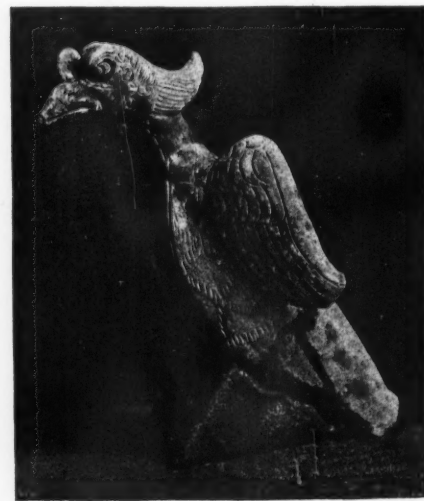
A boxwood modelling tool is desirable, though the student should be encouraged to use the fingers as much as possible, or invent a tool for certain desired effect, such as striping with broken comb; a steel crochet hook or knitting needle is often useful. If the clay becomes dry before the finishing touches are put on, it can be moistened with a brush, when it will easily take the tool marks. A knife blade can be used to scrape off undesired bumps when reviewing for the last time before firing. The pieces can be glazed before firing if the student is careful, putting on two thin coats. Then the piece can be retouched in a subsequent

firing. The powdered glaze should be first carefully mixed with gum tragacanth in a mortar until it becomes a uniform thick paste, then water must be added until of the consistency of a thin cream if put on the green clay before firing. For refiring or glazing on the biscuit it should have the consistency of thick cream. The gum tragacanth is prepared by adding a small handful to a quart of warm water, a little goes a very long way and possibly more water may be needed to make the gum of the proper consistency. When there is enough water the gum will all be dissolved, otherwise there will be thick whitish lumps. If not enough gum is used in the glaze mixture it is liable to lift off in a powder when the second coat is applied. The gum also helps in putting on the glaze smoothly.

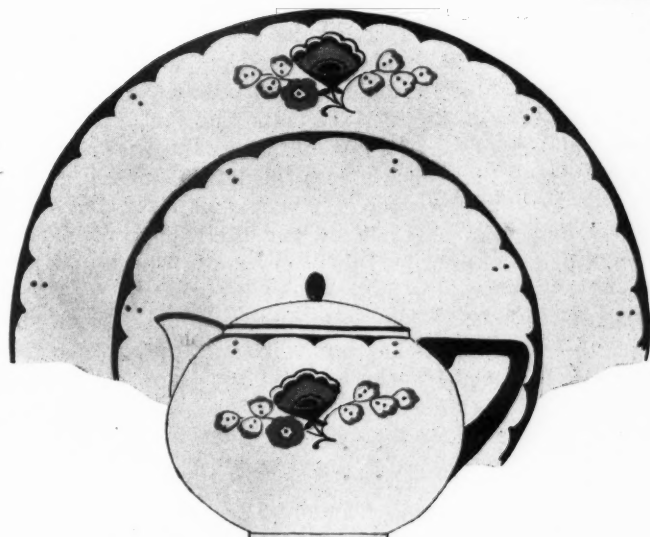
If the modelling is not to be fired, the joy of the unexpected effect of the firing is lost, but there remains the wider opportunity in coloring. The fancy then may run riot and one can have anything from a pink kitten to a purple cow, or even the leopard can change his spots to forget-me-nots or fairy flowers.



T'ang Dynasty—Early Ceramic Wares of China



Oriental Ceramics



BEGINNERS' CORNER

Jetta Ehlers . . . 23 Sherman Ave., Newark, N. J.

FOR WAFFLES

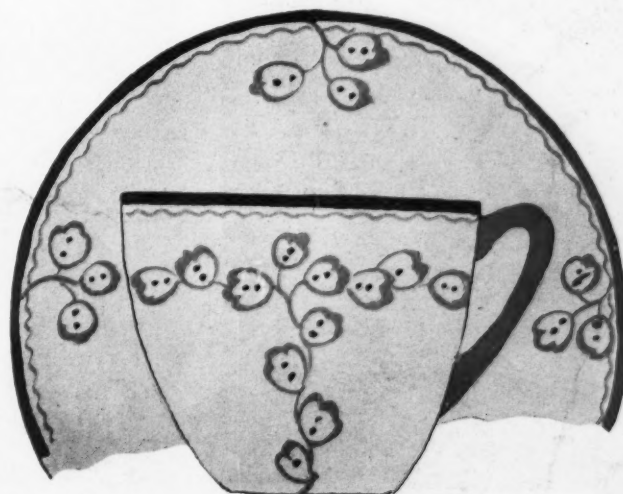
WITH the holiday season near at hand one's thoughts are busy with the gift problem, so we will consider for the page this month a lesson with this fact in mind. Gifts of decorated china are always welcomed by the average housewife, and these days when so many business and professional women are maintaining apartment homes, these things offer a very good solution for the annual puzzle of "just what to give." Then, too, the bachelor friend may be included, for more men than might care to confess to it love to putter at cooking things, and every last one admires to make waffles at the table, so we will let them in on this set. Nothing I am sure is more popular in the food line, and with the electric waffle iron at hand, making and serving them at the table becomes a real pleasure.

In planning a set one should include plates, preferably coupe, a syrup jug and saucer, a large coupe plate to hold the freshly baked supply, small butter plates, and a pitcher for the batter. Many people choose a glass pitcher for this purpose as at a glance one may see just how things are holding out. The small dishes, known as butter pats, are very nice to use in place of the regulation bread and butter plate and take up less room. This is to be considered for often in entertaining informally a card table or some other small one is used. Waffles are delightful to serve for afternoon tea, especially if one has been enjoying a good, stiff round of golf in the sharp and snappy air. They are equally good for that late spread after an evening of bridge and if you have ever served them made unsweetened and topped with Welsh rarebit your guests will sing your praises. Waffles for this should be very crisp and brown. Though our set has been planned for special occasions the plates and little syrup jug could be used at any meal. If a heavier ware is preferred there are nice coupe plates to be had in Satsuma and since these could be done with enamels a very striking set might be worked out. As the usual hard white china is always to be had I will give the directions for working on this kind.

The design given is to be done in three colors, a nice Turquoise, Royal Blue and a clear bright Green. The bands, knob, and handle are of Royal Blue, the dots Turquoise.

The light section of the flower forms are Turquoise with all of the darker parts Royal Blue. The light part of the leaf forms are Green, the centers left white, and the dots Royal Blue. Stems are also Royal Blue. Green and Blue is one of the color combinations of which one never tires, and in contrast with the white of the china it makes a very satisfying decorative scheme. It is very difficult in writing these instructions to give the exact color to be used as readers are using so many different brands. There are a few greens so good for conventional work as the old Lacroix tube color Emerald Stone Green. Many people are unable to secure this as few dealers carry the tube china paints any longer. A mixture of one part Deep Blue Green and two parts of Royal Green makes an excellent green which is clear and cool in value. Apple Green painted in full value and re-touched for the second firing also gives a very decorative color. Avoid the rather muddy greens of which Olive is an example. For this particular sort of decoration, which we term flat color work, the colors are used very pure as a rule. This gives a certain gay, peasant-like quality which is very charming and is a type of decoration many of the advanced workers are using. So many of the reds lack in brilliancy after they are fired. Yellow Red is perhaps the best all-round color, but is best painted rather thinly for first firing with another light wash applied for the second. If it is painted on heavily it loses in beauty and becomes very dull and uninteresting. The blues vary a great deal. A good dark one is the Royal Blue so often mentioned. In some makes this is known as Aztec Blue, Chinese Blue, and in still others as Dark Blue. It is a rich dark color but two paintings are really necessary to get a full value. Banding Blue with a little Black added makes a good color but care must be exercised lest too much Black be used. A good blue of the turquoise variety is Russian Green. This may be used pure or some Deep Blue Green added if a bluer turquoise is wanted. Deep Blue Green may be used with Apple Green for still another variety. In some makes a turquoise may be entirely satisfactory. Yellow Brown varies greatly in different makes but it should be bright and glowing and not dull and brownish. So it is only in a general way that the colors can be named.

The first step in our work will be to make a careful and accurate tracing of the design. Place this in position on the china, fastening it into place with small pieces of adhesive plaster. Transfer to the china by means of impression paper and tracing point. The design is to be outlined with



Cup and Saucer—Jetta Ehlers

the same color used for painting, that is, the leaves with Green, the large flower with Royal Blue and the smaller one with Russian Green. The colors are prepared by mixing a little on a small glass slab or a saucer with just enough outline medium to bind it together, then thinned with water to flow freely from the pen. Do not make the mistake of using an outline medium with an oil base, which of course, will not mix with water. The kind for this purpose has sugar or gum arabic as a base. It dries at once and may be worked over with the china colors before it is fired without danger of its pulling up or smudging. In mixing the colors for painting use only enough painting medium to mix into a rather stiff mass. Avoid an excess of oil. A little turpentine on the brush will assist in spreading the color. Great care must be used to lay this flat color very cleanly and to not fuss over it when it has once been laid in. This oft repeated instruction may seem overdone to you, but remember we have to have traffic towers and traffic lights, and officers to call the attention of people to them, though every one knows they are there and what they are for!

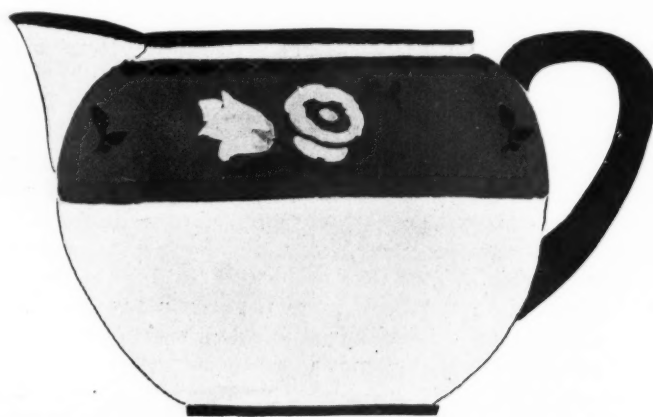
This little motif is within the ability of any beginner as no shading is involved and because of the simple color scheme. Lay in the Turquoise Blue first in the center of the large flower, using Russian Green. The small flower at lower left is also of this color. Use a small square shader for this, a No. 4 being excellent. Next lay in the Royal Blue which is represented by the dark in the pattern, using a small pointed brush, a No. 4. This pointed brush will be best for the leaves which are to be painted with the mixture of Royal Green and Deep Blue Green previously given. The stems and dots in the leaves are Royal Blue. Keep the edges crisp, not ragged and untidy, but, of course, your outline of color will help keep this nice. So much of the success of this sort of work depends upon the neatness with which it is done. With very careful painting the design may go through in one painting and firing, but it will probably require a retouching and second firing. Be careful in this second painting to not use too much color. Remember that the best results, the most brilliant and transparent color, is obtained without piling on the paint. There are a few points in summing up for us to bear in mind: Keep the

colors pure and in pretty full value for flat color work. If you do not the effect will be washed out and insipid. It should have some of the quality of the peasant type. *Do not* pile on the paint to do this. Take up plenty of color on the brush but learn to lay it in a clean, even wash which will have quality without quantity. *Do not* use muddy greens for this sort of decoration. It should be clear and fresh looking, much like what is known as "Kelly" green. *Do not* send china to be fired until it is dry enough to handle and be sure and look on the underside of things for stray finger marks and smudges which should at once be removed with turpentine. And then one last word for the beginner: *do not* be discouraged if your work at first is disappointing. Take a fresh breath and go at it again, and *keep* going. Unless you are one of the very few hopeless sort who can not do manual labor, you will win out.

TREATMENT FOR BOWL DESIGN (Page 119)

May Warner

White, Cream or Light Green ground. Ladies' dresses and hats Orange Scarlet, which is repeated in a band inside of bowl. Black spaces are Black enamel. Hat and flowers are Red Violet. Flower pot and other spots Greenish Yellow. Face and pantalettes White.



Luncheon Set—Jetta Ehlers

MOUNTAIN MOTIFS IN DECORATIVE DESIGN

(Continued from page 105)

What to do with these motifs when one has learned pretty well how to produce good ones? Panels and borders might be the first to try. Enlarge the problem by the addition of cloud bands for the top of the panel and a wavy rhythm for the bottom, (see illustration 6), keeping the mountain shapes carefully dominant, and the cloud and wave elements in nice proportionate adjustment to the whole—then paint them in clearly differentiated values. Border patterns? Yes. They, too, are fun. We approach them by finding what we can do with a strong horizontal emphasis upon forms and groupings, as shown in the examples from Miss Wedemeyer and Miss Winn. How they follow up you may see for yourself.

♦ ♦ ♦

AFTER-DINNER COFFEE CUP AND SAUCER

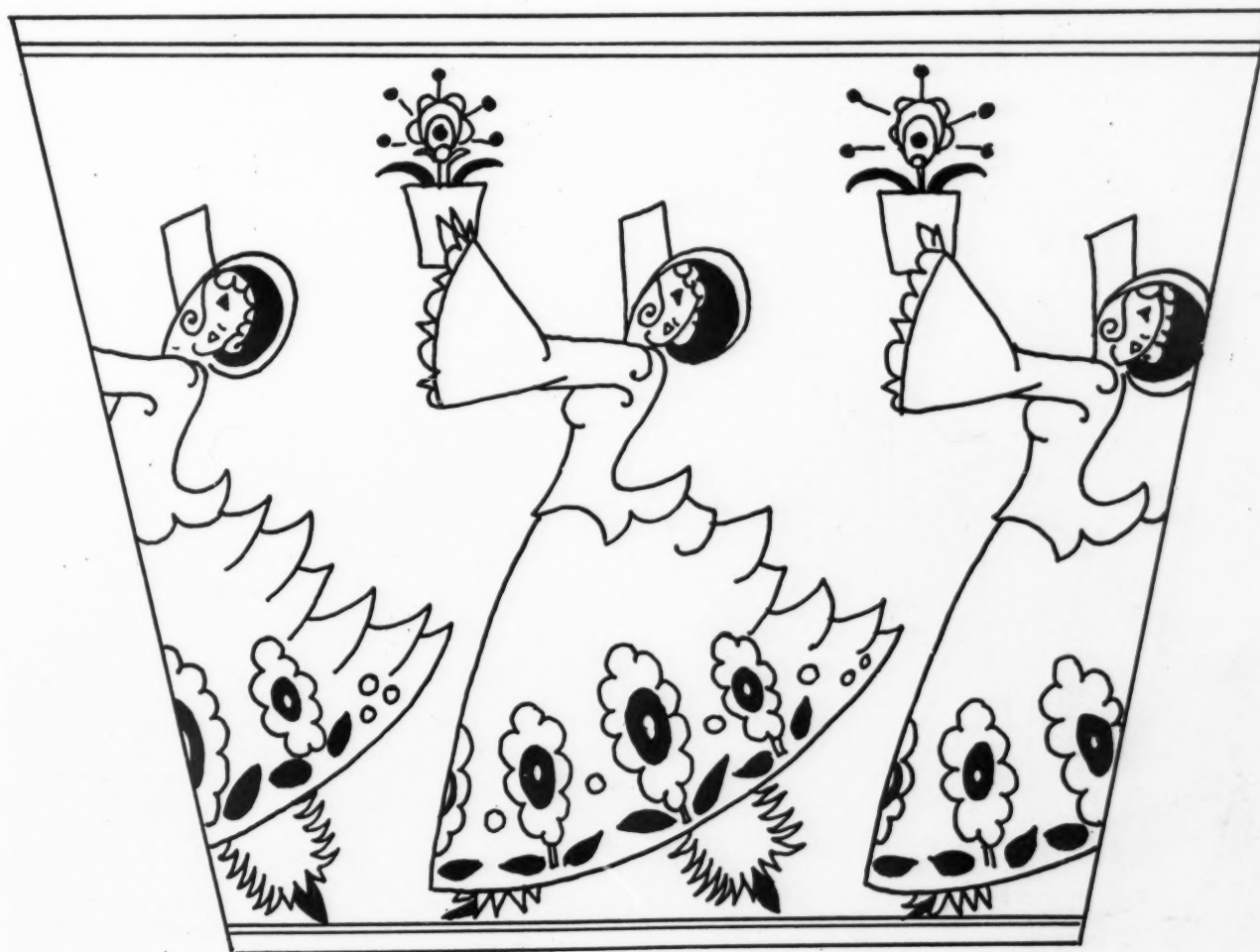
*(Page 117)**Jetta Ehlers*

This little cup and saucer is an example of the simple adaptation of part of a design to make another decoration. You will recognize it as part of the design for the waffle set on the Beginners' Page. It will work out attractively in gold, with gold handles, but with Black for the bands and dots in the leaves. The little wavy band is to be gold. A rather interesting treatment would be to use Yellow Red where the Black is called for. This used on a red lacquer tray in serving would make a rather stunning effect.



Design for Tile—Nellie Hagan

Soft enamels on ivory background. Flowers, Night Blue and Yale Blue, Wistaria and Lilac, with Gold in light spots. Stems, Dark Green. Leaves, Bright Green. Border, Night Blue and Gold.



Design for Bowl—May Warner



DELPHINIUM
PERENNIAL.
KARXSPUR

Delphinium—Adelaide Alsop-Robineau